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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/853,902	05/14/2001	Stefan Wieland	33766W030	6174

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EXAMINER

LANGEL, WAYNE A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1754

DATE MAILED: 12/11/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/853902

Applicant(s)

Wieland et al

Examiner

Langel

Group Art Unit

1754

— The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet beneath the correspondence address —

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE _____ MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, such period shall, by default, expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____

10-28-03

☒ This action is **FINAL**.

☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

☒ Claim(s) _____ is/are pending in the application.

1-16

Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

☒ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.

1-16

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement

Application Papers

☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.

☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner

☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d)

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d).

☐ All ☐ Some* ☐ None of the:

☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____

☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received

in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a))

*Certified copies not received: _____

Attachment(s)

☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____

☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413

☐ Notice of Reference(s) Cited, PTO-892

☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

☐ Other _____

Office Action Summary

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The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-6 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chintawar et al. in view of Klein et al., for the reasons given in the last Office action.

Claims 7-9 and 11-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chintawar et al. in view of Klein et al. as applied to claims 1-6 and 10 above, and further in view of either Choudhary et al. or Fujitani et al., for the reasons given in the last Office action.

Applicant's argument, that the present invention claims a process for autothermal catalytic steam reforming of hydrocarbons, is not convincing, since Chintawar et al. teach at column 12, lines 20 and 21 that the process may entail autothermal reforming. Applicant's argument, that the claimed process involves preheating a reactant mixture of hydrocarbons, oxygen and water or water vapor, is not convincing. Applicant's claims do not recite "preheating a reacted mixture containing

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hydrocarbons, oxygen and water", but rather recite "passing a reacted mixture of hydrocarbons, oxygen and water or water vapor, 'heated to a preheating temperature'". The hydrocarbons, oxygen and steam reactants in the process of Chintawar et al. would inherently be heated to a preheating temperature, since the reactants react during the autothermal reforming. Applicant's argument, that Klein et al. do not disclose, teach or suggest the catalyst useful in an autothermal reforming process, where a preheated reactant mixture of hydrocarbons, oxygen and water or water vapor, is passed over the catalyst adiabatically, is not convincing, since Klein et al. is merely cited to establish the conventionality of employing catalysts which re present as a coating on the support structure. Since Chintawar et al. teach at column 10, lines 4-10 that the catalytic metal may be dispersed by any known method, it would be prima facie obvious to disperse the catalytic metal of Chintawar et al. by the coating method of Klein et al. There is no evidence on record of unexpected results which would emanate from employing a coated catalyst in the process of Chintawar et al., as opposed to the catalysts which are specifically disclosed by Chintawar et al.

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a).

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A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR RESPONSE TO THIS FINAL ACTION IS SET TO EXPIRE THREE MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS ACTION. IN THE EVENT A FIRST RESPONSE IS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE MAILING DATE OF THIS FINAL ACTION AND THE ADVISORY ACTION IS NOT MAILED UNTIL AFTER THE END OF THE THREE-MONTH SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD, THEN THE SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD WILL EXPIRE ON THE DATE THE ADVISORY ACTION IS MAILED, AND ANY EXTENSION FEE PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) WILL BE CALCULATED FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THE ADVISORY ACTION. IN NO EVENT WILL THE STATUTORY PERIOD FOR RESPONSE EXPIRE LATER THAN SIX MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS FINAL ACTION.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Wayne A. Langel whose telephone number is (703) 308-0248. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stanley Silverman, can be reached on (703) 308-3837. The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 872-9306.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-2351.

WAL:cdc

December 9, 2003

Wayne A. Langel
WAYNE A. LANGEL
PRIMARY EXAMINER